



*Dr. Mary L. Livers, Deputy Secretary*

Summer has officially arrived, but the heat – both literally and figuratively – has been brutal for some time.

I am delighted to report that the legislative session has ended and we can all take a sigh of relief. OJJ, like all agencies, got most of what we need for the next fiscal year, so we should be okay. One of the best things about the end of the session is that those of us who spend our days at the capitol can now get back to the office. There's a lot going on and I'm looking forward to rolling up my sleeves and digging in.

Maybe with the end of both the session and the drought, we'll enjoy some cooler temperatures.

As ever, this month's issue of *The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is full of news. One of my favorite sections is the success stories, and you have sent in quite a few. Reading those stories keeps our mission firmly top-of-mind – helping our kids succeed is what we are all about.

I hope you enjoy reading what goes on throughout OJJ's world as much as I do.

**"Doc" Dr. Mary L. Livers**

## The Daily Motivator

### Long after

Long after the kind word is spoken, the encouragement remains.

Long after the good deed is done, the goodness lingers on.

Long after the moment passes, the joy continues.

Long after the lesson is learned, wisdom keeps growing.

What you do in this moment brings value not only to this moment.

Much of the value you create now can stay with you always.

The truth of who you are, and of what you do, accumulates as time goes on.

That's why staying focused on what's truly important can bring such spectacular results.

The sooner you make the effort, the more its power can be multiplied.

Value continues to build on top of value, so the best thing you can do right now is create some more of it.

Long after this moment is gone, you can be profoundly thankful for the way you lived it.

This is your chance to make it count, now and long after.

— Ralph Marston

## Staff Spotlight



### Spotlight on...

**SSC 5 Violet Lee,**

**Swanson Center for Youth**

**Violet Lee** knows what home looks like. She served as a Swanson group leader from 2001 until 2007 and left to work as a program manager for an area medical provider. Two years later, Violet was back at Swanson and it looks like she's here for the long haul.

The Monroe native is a graduate of Wossman High School and holds two degrees from ULM – a Bachelor of Arts in psychology and a Masters of Arts in substance abuse counseling. In addition, she has a string of letters behind her name – LPC (Licensed Professional Counselor), LMFT (Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist), and NCC (National Certified Counselor).

"I chose Violet as the employee to spotlight because of her character and commitment," said **Director Carolyn Atkins**. "Miss Lee is short in stature, but a giant at heart. When I appointed her as group leader for Mimosa Dorm, her concern was ensuring that her young son was taken care of. She has the same concern for our youth. Miss Lee is firm, but flexible. She gives our youth 110% every day."

Violet is a single mother of an 11-year old son, Cameron. A flexible work schedule is important, as it allows her the time she needs to spend time with her son. "The kids ask if I make my son circle up, and they say they feel sorry for Cameron," Violet said, laughing. "I tell them that yes, he and my niece have to talk about how they feel. They know about accountability and natural consequences."

Swanson **JJS Dorothy Lee** is Violet's mother. She has been at Swanson for 12 years. After

high school she attended college for a semester before leaving to start her family. With her three children grown and many years of experience at Swanson, Dorothy considered the idea of pursuing the Certificate of Technical Studies: Juvenile Justice. "I'd been out of school for 30 years," Dorothy said. "I asked my kids if they thought I could do it. Violet helped me so much – starting two years ago I would never have even considered it. Violet encouraged me, and she taught me how to use the computer, too. Some days were worse than others, but once I got back into a pattern of studying, it got better. But now I earned the certificate, and I've decided that this is not going to be it. I've already signed up at the community college to go for a two-year Associate Degree. Who knows what's next? I'm going to keep on growing."



*Violet and Dorothy Lee*

Violet relates that when she first came to Swanson, the only therapeutic community was in the substance abuse program. The other dorms did not have such programming, she said. Now, LAMOD is in place everywhere. "I am so pleased with the LAMOD program," Violet said. "It provides ongoing therapy at all times. The program allows the youth to see that this is how healthy relationships look."

Dorothy said she learned a lot in the classes. "It opened up a new way of thinking for me," she said. "I learned better ways of working with our kids. Violet broke the ice for me,

and she taught one of the classes – group dynamics of LAMOD."

"Expectations are important and we talk about the importance of applying the information we learn," Violet said. "You have to look at the kids' personalities, and remember that mental illness plays a large part in their behavior and their treatment."

***"LAMOD teaches the importance of healthy relationships."***

"LAMOD teaches the importance of healthy relationships," Dorothy said. "Expectations were not clearly defined for a lot of our kids. I never would have known about kids' hidden thoughts and feelings if I had not taken those classes. The kids bring a lot of baggage with them. We learned coping skills to keep from getting too close and we learned not to take things personally. I see a lot more since taking the classes. I understand the youth better."

With ten years of experience working with kids, Violet also conducts group therapy at the Johnny Robinson group home on weekends. "Some people don't deal well with aggressive kids, but I am not afraid to work with them," Violet said. "I see past that and I try to be empathetic with what they are trying to do. I've watched as kids calm down."

Early on, as a member of Zeta Phi Beta sorority, Violet was required to do community service hours. "I saw kids in school, filthy. I was supposed to tutor them in academics but I learned it was important to the kids to keep both themselves and their possessions safe. It's important to make sure they can trust the people around them. Kids have to feel safe, or they will fight in order to be safe."

"Our kids live in a different world that I can't imagine," Violet added. "Many of our kids have never had a bedroom of their own, or even a bed or a place to stay. A lot of us don't know how to deal with them. Some kids will be angry but I do not back down. I've seen kids cry. I get them to express their

expectations and say what it is they want. You have to remember, they are still kids.”

Violet can see past those issues and get a sense of what’s going on with kids. “They learned what they needed to do to cope, and it becomes about that – getting their needs met,” she noted. “Kids need to have food. If they see that you have food, they think they have to take it from you and eat it.”

“Many times, the bad behavior is a coping mechanism,” Violet said. “They have learned that’s how you stay safe – no one comes near them. Our job is to make them understand how the bad behavior keeps them from getting what they really want. They want a family, but they keep pushing people away.”

*“Staff have to be good role models because the kids observe who you are.”*

Staff have to be good role models because the kids observe who you are, both mother and daughter agreed. “They have to see that aggressive behavior is inappropriate behavior. It’s amazing what the kids actually do and listen to.”

As role models, staff discover a lot of teachable moments. “If you don’t know what a clean house looks like, you don’t know how to clean a house,” Violet said. “If you have never seen a behavior pattern, you don’t just know how to act. Many of our kids don’t have stability and those good role models.”

“The kids have to learn that if you do not follow expectations in the real world, you’re out,” Violet said. “Wherever you are, you have to follow expectations, all your life. That is a reality that a lot of kids do not understand.” She recognizes that staff play a vital role in kids’ lives. “If we did not have them here, a lot of our kids would be dead in the street.”

“The kids will tell you, if I go back out there, I will be dead,” Violet said. “We want our kids to succeed, so I tell them to take

advantage of the education they get here. I tell them to teach their little brothers and sisters. Take advantage of the vocational education opportunities so they can help take care of their siblings and help to pull their family out of a rough situation. My job is to teach them to be independent and how to build their own families.”

*“A main component in becoming a man is forgiveness.”*

“Our parents love their kids, sometimes they cry on the telephone,” Violet added. “Sometimes they just don’t know how to take care of them.” Family therapy, in effect, will help build relationships with the parents, Violet said. “We have to understand the family situation; family contact is so important. We help to build that relationship by teaching our kids that the parents love them. A main component in becoming a man is forgiveness.”

Sometimes, after release, kids will call to check in, Violet said. “I remind them that they need to be involved in a healthy family. I always listen to the kids and encourage them to tell their parents what’s going on. That’s how to build a relationship.”

You have to understand and see things from the kids’ perspective, she went on. “My mother has always worked with at-risk kids, and I worked at a girls’ group home as an undergraduate. We have to partner in helping the kids deal with their struggles. They are going back into the community. You have to remember that if a teenager commits an offense, there are two victims. If their world is healthy, we won’t see a lot of these problems.”

Working with kids appears to be an avocation for Violet as much as her vocation. Her son has been a Boy Scout since first grade, and she is involved with his troop. Violet spends a lot of her personal time with Cameron, who is also an athlete. He plays baseball, football, basketball and soccer. A rising seventh grader



at Ouachita Junior High School, he is also in the school band, playing percussion. Cameron was recently inducted into the national Beta Club at Disneyworld.

In her “spare time” Violet enjoys reading and watching scary movies, especially science fiction. She is also very involved in her church, New Light Baptist Church. She is a member of the church’s economic empowerment committee, working to change a community where there is a lot of poverty and crime. “We bring in free tutors and recreation opportunities, and we teach needed skills,” she said. “We provide back-to-school packets of supplies, and have back-to-school seminars. We do a mental health fair and we teach self-worth. We know that teens are often left out of certain issues, so we teach them what abusive relationships look like for adolescents and school-aged children.”

Violet also teaches Vacation Bible School (VBS) most years. “We use the applications to teach kids in the community to use Biblical principles to deal with some of their real stressors. God really wants me to work with kids. He lets me see things that others do not necessarily see. I am always ready to talk with kids – many times, they don’t have anyone to talk to. We need to learn how to talk with them, and how to listen. The kids have to learn how to initiate discussions with their siblings. They need to learn how healthy families look so they can get their needs met.”

“What I am trying to do is work myself out of a job,” Violet said. “By helping our kids and their families, we are trying to teach our boys how to be good parents and husbands, and how to respect females. We teach them how the simple stuff, like pulling up their pants, will help them on the job.”

This mother-daughter team is working together to make a better life for our kids. Teaching and learning, modeling the way and meeting the mission. “I want to make things safer for my own son,” Violet said. “There is so much sadness, and I want to be there to help.”

## **Transitions ...Comings and Goings.....**

### **New Faces**

#### **Bridge City Center for Youth**

**Dianne Heims – JJS 1**

**Valerie Joseph – JJS 1**

**Courtney Lawson – JJS 1**

**Johne Mitchell – JJS 1**

**Jonathan Rollins – JJS 1**

**Amanda Smith – JJS 1**

**Dontrey Tatum – JJS 1**

**Priscilla Williams – JJS 1**

#### **Jetson Center for Youth**

**Chresancio Jackson – JJS 1**

**Anthony James – JJS 2**

**Shirley Reado – Substitute Teacher**

**Rena Thomas –Corr. Dietetics Manager**

**Kyle Vanvoorhis – JJS 1**

#### **Swanson Center for Youth**

**Lawanda Buggs – Executive Staff Officer**

**Carlton Brown – JJS 1**

**Christopher Brown – JJS 1**

**Karen Connolly – Admin. Coordinator 3**

### **Promotions**

#### **Natchitoches**

**Nelda Graham – Social Worker 5-A**

#### **Lake Charles**

**Karli Pullard – P&P Program Specialist**

### **Retirements**

#### **Central Office**

**Marianne Buchanan –Deputy**

**Undersecretary, 29 years of service**

#### **Swanson Center for Youth**

**Emma Dawson – Administrative Program**

**Manager, 38 years of service**

## CQIS POLICY UPDATES

- A.1.1 "Policy and Correspondence Distribution" – Attachment (b) Policy Index - 5/11/11
- A.1.8 "Emergency Operations Plan" - 2/25/11
- A.2.17 "Employee Suspensions: Pending Investigation, Enforced Annual Leave, Pending Criminal Proceedings" – 5/5/11
- A.2.22 "Violence Free Workplace – 5/2/11
- C.2.1 "Escapes, Runaways, Apprehensions, and Reporting" – 5/5/11
- C.2.6 "Use of Interventions – Secure Care" – 5/5/11
- C.2.12 "Emergency Escorting" – 5/4/11
- C.2.13 "Key Control Program" – 5/27/11
- C.6.1 "Food Services" – 5/3/11

## Rescinded

- DYS Policy 4.1 "Budget Preparation" – 5/16/11
- DYS Policy 10.16 "Location and Recovery of Absconders" – 5/16/11

## CO SOPs Issued in May 2011:

- C.O.9 "Office Space" – 5/11/11
- C.O.11 "General Safety Rules" – 5/17/11



*This is my ever blooming hydrangea starting to sprout. It is a new variety introduced last summer. - Lynne Geromini, central office Administrative Program Director, CQIS.*

## Success – Meeting the Mission

We love stories about our youth overcoming adversity and the situations they find themselves in. As often as not, when the youth is successful, there's a PPO who has been hard at work alongside that kid. Several regional offices share success stories this month.

### Monroe Shares a Tribute to Maximillian



*Youth Maximillian Muse with Judge Sharon Marchman*

Maximillian, age 17, is a youth who came to the attention of the Office of Juvenile Justice in the year of 2006. His behavior necessitated a collaborative effort between OJJ and the Ouachita Parish Juvenile Drug Court Program.

This officer, along with the Drug Court Team members, put our efforts and resources together. We developed a plan to address the needs of this youth and his family. We agreed to refer Maximillian to the Louisiana National Guard Youth Challenge Program. The **Honorable Judge Sharon Marchman** at the helm asked us to continue to monitor Maximillian.

Maximillian took the opportunity to gain a sense of independence. His words were "I think I can do it, Gary Hunter." My reply to him was "you can and I expect you, Maximillian Muse, to do a good job." I

assured him that he would not be alone. Each time this officer contacted the Louisiana National Guard Program, Camp Beauregard, the report I received was that Maximillian was a hard worker and determined to finish the program.

On June 11, 2011, Maximillian was honored as a Five Star Cadet graduate of the Youth Challenge Program. He received the most improved cadet certificate. After his graduation from YCP, the Court and the Drug Court team invited Maximillian and his mother to participate in the Drug Court commencement exercise held at the Ouachita Parish 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Courtroom, presided over by Sharon Marchman. In suspense, the Drug Court Team and I were excited to see the difference in Maximillian.

We could not have imagined how one step further would have given Maximillian an even brighter future in his community. Maximillian was dressed in his military BDUs (battle dress uniform) and boots and really looked good. His upright stance, confident walk, and ambitious appearance were exuberant and fulfilling for us to witness.

As Maximillian received his certificate of completion, he stood upright and encouraged incoming participants by stating, "It was hard, but I learned to talk with my cadre and manage my anger." Maximillian further noted that he was always reminded that he is somebody and we all, at times, have problems. What is most important is how we choose to handle them.

As his Probation Officer, I am very proud of Maximillian Muse, and the Drug Court Team and many others are as well. We congratulate Maximillian and sincerely thank his mother for this opportunity to go one step further, which we feel has made a definite difference in the life of this youth. It is this officer's prayer that this is the beginning of a new, productive life for Maximillian.

A proud PPO,

*Gary L. Hunter*, Monroe OJJ

### Alexandria OJJ Shares a Success Story

Youth Q. Quinn from Concordia Parish, on the caseload of **PPO3 Trinity Adams**, graduated high school and has been accepted to the University of Texas in Arlington. He was also accepted at Morehouse College and St. Thomas Aquinas College. We at OJJ Alexandria are proud of this young man and wish him the best as he starts his journey in life.

### Monroe OJJ Reports Another Great Success

Monroe OJJ is proud to share pride in one of our youth, **Jeremiah G.** Jeremiah is a former client of **PPO3 Jennifer Perkins Bible** and the late **PPO3 Don Hamler**. Jeremiah G. was a probation and non-secure custody client with OJJ several years ago. He has visited Mrs. Bible several times since he exited as a client. His progress and ongoing dedication to become a successful citizen have been outstanding. Jeremiah graduated with honors from Grambling State University in May, with his Bachelor's degree in liberal arts, with a major in psychology. He plans to attend graduate school in Texas to pursue his Masters degree in forensic psychology. Congratulations Jeremiah, and good work, Jennifer.

### Lafayette OJJ Enjoys Success

**PPO Kristi Eames** happily reports the following successes from her caseload: **Tess L.** graduated from Acadiana Christian Academy with a 3.5 GPA! **Toi B.** received his GED through the KYTE program, and graduated onstage at Lafayette High School's commencement in May. **Josh L.** is well along in the National Guard's Youth Challenge Program, and is scheduled to complete the program in June. **Zackary J.** received his GED in May. And, **Chris S.** received his GED in May, and has enlisted in the National Guard. He will be leaving for boot camp in Georgia. You make us all proud!



## Hammond Client is Ahead of Her Class

By PPO2 Daniel Mingea, III

It is always easier for people to blame others, to blame circumstances, for their misfortune. It is easier for people to point the finger, and watch others panicking, trying to fix their life, instead of them stepping up to the plate, and making a difference for themselves.



There was one young lady who saw that the final stop on that road was not where she wanted to be. She realized it was time for a change, and that time was now.

**Brittany N.** was placed on probation in April 2010. At the time, she was struggling with academics and school attendance. However, the real issue was that she had not yet decided for herself that she wanted more for her life. She had not yet concluded that the decision was hers and hers alone.

By February 2011 the decision was finally made, and Brittany made her move. She transferred from Ponchatoula High School to the Tangipahoa Parish Option III/ Northshore Technical College. There, Brittany excelled in the Options III program while earning her GED as well as her CNA certificate.

Options III **Administrative Assistant Rosilyn McKneely** recently said that Brittany was one of her best students, if not the best student of her class. Brittany was given the honor to speak at her graduation ceremony, and to offer her personal testimony on the path she took to accomplish her feat. She also thanked her family members, and friends who helped support her on her mission, as well as the positive change the Options III program made in her life.

Along with her academic achievements, Brittany successfully completed probation last month, and is now considering pursuit of higher education at the next level.

## Thibodaux Regional Office

### Congratulations

**PPS Robert Duet** was the May **Employee of the Month**. Robert is a valuable asset to our team here in Thibodaux.

### State Employee Recognition



Thibodaux OJJ held a crawfish boil to celebrate State Employee Recognition Week.

## Tallulah Regional Office

**PPO Terry Berry's daughter Taylor** was elected Miss Oak Grove High School and is an honor graduate!

**PPO2 Robert Johnson** participated in a career/college fair held at Madison Parish Middle School in May. Various organizations were asked to attend the fair to show students some of the employment options available to them upon completing school. Robert set up a booth and interacted with the 8th grade students. In addition to handing out candy, Robert explained the probation officer's basic duties and the prerequisites to becoming a probation officer with the students. He also discussed community services that are available in the 6th Judicial District/Madison Parish area to assist juveniles in getting back on the right track. At the conclusion of the fair, the school issued a Certificate of Appreciation to Tallulah OJJ for doing our part in participating in the "furtherance of our community's youth's future."



## Swanson Center for Youth

### Swanson Youth Testify to Legislature

OJJ was called to the House Judiciary Committee to update the members on activities at Swanson. That gave us a great opportunity to talk about all the good things going on at Swanson. Swanson **Director Carolyn Atkins** brought a group that included two youth, staff, parents, two Grambling professors and a U.S. Marshal intern, to testify. **Youths Quintin C. and Eric S.** told the committee that they are well-treated, are learning well and receiving needed treatment. They both said the staff care about them and are helping them to become the best they can be. **Quintin's parents, Mr. and Mrs. C.,** were there to support their son, and his mother described the excellent services their son receives. She said that they visit every visitation day, and have met the staff, so they can see how well treated the kids are. She said they are proud their son is at Swanson, where he is doing well and receiving the services he needs to be successful.



*Swanson Youth Quintin C., DAS Sean Hamilton and Youth Eric S., testify to the House Judiciary Committee.*

**Dr. Joyce Montgomery-Scott** and **Dr. Marianne Fisher-Giorlando**, Grambling State University criminal justice professors, testified about the quality of care at Swanson, and discussed the mentoring program they have put into place that matches Swanson youth with Grambling students. **U.S. Marshal intern Steven Jackson** described his

positive experiences in working with Swanson youth as a mentor.

Shreveport **PPO3 Todd Carlisle**, who transported Mr. and Mrs. C from Shreveport (they live in Vivian, almost another hour further), **SCY JJS Julia Jackson** and **JJS Gerson Garcia** who transported the youth and provided security, observed the hearing as well. The youth and staff also had the opportunity to observe the House of Representatives in session, from the viewing gallery, to see how the House operates and how laws are made.

### Swanson's First Class of Juvenile Justice Certificate Grads Honored



*Juvenile Justice Certificate graduates Donald Armstrong, Felicia Jackson, Connie Roberts, Romona Montgomery and Dorothy Lee.*

Nine Swanson staff received their Certificate of Technical Studies: Juvenile Justice in May. A ceremony was held where the graduates received certificates of achievement signed by **Dr. Mary Livers** and **Director Carolyn Atkins**. After the ceremony, the graduates were honored at a reception where each received a gift.

Staff who received the Juvenile Justice Certificate are **JJS5 Donald Armstrong**, **JJS2 Phyllis Benton**, **JJS3 Elisha Brown**, **JJS3 Willie Hill**, **JJS1 Willis Hollis**, **JJS3 Felicia Jackson**, **JJS3 Dorothy Lee**, **JJS3 Romona Montgomery** and **Administrative Coordinator 4 Connie Roberts**.



*Our proud graduates include Willis Hollis, Dorothy Lee, Connie Roberts, Phyllis Benton, Willie Hill, Felicia Jackson and Donald Armstrong.*

### Employee Appreciation Week

During the first week of May, Swanson celebrated Employee Appreciation Week with a little something every day. We started the week off on Monday by presenting staff with “years of service” certificates. On Tuesday, the 11:30p-7:30a shift was served hot sausage, homemade waffles and fresh fruit as they were relieved of duty. Then for lunch, all daytime staff and the evening shift were served grilled hamburgers, sausage links, potato salad and homemade dessert. (**Director Atkins** baked 22 cakes and eight pans of brownies for this!!)



*Director Carolyn Atkins, Admin. Coordinator Kristi Walker, SSC Dusty Teer, and Admin. Assistant Linda Harrell serving an employee appreciation lunch.*

Wednesday was snack day; the night shift got a cereal bar on their way out and the other staff had popcorn. Thanks to **Blue Bell Creameries**, on Thursday we had ice cream.

And we ended the week Friday with t-shirt and tennis shoes day.



*JJS Dornesia Harris, JJS Patricia Williams and JJS Sharon Hall enjoying the employee appreciation lunch.*



*“The Cook” – Program Coordinator John Preston at the grill for the employee appreciation lunch.*

Friday JJSs got to wear their favorite t-shirt and tennis shoes. And to make it a little more fun, we had a contest for the most unique and most funny t-shirt. **JJS Brittany Augerson** won most unique with her “I love my job” shirt. The prize for the funniest shirt went to **Instructor Lydia May** for her shirt “call me and let’s ‘ketchup.’”



*Left: JJS Brittany Augerson was the winner with the most unique tee shirt. Right: Instructor Lydia May was the winner with the funniest tee shirt.*



## Chaplain Conducts Epiphany, Revival and Volunteer Orientation

Our chaplain **Rev. Ricky James** had a very busy month! During the month of May, Rev. James put together a program for National Day of Prayer and an Epiphany reunion. Annual training and orientation was held for volunteers who plan to minister in Bible study, birthday parties, chapel services, etc., at Swanson.



*Epiphany Reunion*



*Instructor Rev. Lorenzo Brown at the National Day of Prayer program.*

Then, our 7<sup>th</sup> annual revival was held with **Pastor Oliver W. Billups** serving as guest minister. It was a one-night event, but it was a powerful night. Rev. Billups talked to our youth about making choices and the consequences of making bad choices. He said that sometimes we make what at first seems to be the right choice, but in hindsight we see

that it was a silly and foolish choice. His message was centered on Bible scriptures in Luke about the "Prodigal Son," who made, what he thought at the time was a good choice: to leave home with all that belonged to him and spending in a foolish manner. But after spending all that he had, he realized he had made a silly and foolish choice.

## Shreveport Regional Office

### Congratulations

**Employee of the Month** for May was **PPO Jarred Cram**. Jarred was recognized for being a hard worker and a great asset to the office.

### Restorative Justice

**Shreveport OJJ** recognized Children's Mental Health Week by wearing green ribbons.

**Shreveport OJJ** also participated in the annual Pet Savers Pet Walk in support of local animal shelters.

### Training and Development

**RM Kristi Martin** continues to participate in weekly meetings of the CSoC workgroups.

**PPS Rick Ladner** and several PPOs participated in reclassification staffings for youth at SCY in May.

**RM Kristi Martin** and **PS Jan Crain** attended an Appreciation Luncheon for **Dr. Livers** in Baton Rouge.

After hours curfew checks were conducted during May under the supervision of **PPS Steve Martino** and **PPS Guy May**.

**RM Kristi Martin** and **PS Jan Crain** attended the Caddo Youth and Children Planning Board Meeting.

**PPO Ticia Juneau** and **PPO Jennifer Hill-Dingler** attended FARA Risk Management courses held locally.

**PPO Todd Carlisle** attended Family Night at Goodwill Reintegration.

**PPO Sandy Ersoff** and **PPO Terri Harber** attended graduation ceremonies for the Bossier Parish Sherriff's Office Young Marine Program.

### **Congratulations**



**PPO Terri Harber** recently became a grandmother. **Samuel Lamar Harber** was born May 5, weighing 7 lbs., 3 oz., and was 19 ½ inches long. Terri was in the Shreveport office working that day, when she received a telephone call at 9:32 am. She arrived at

O'Hara International Airport in Chicago, IL at 4:30 pm. Some people may think she hijacked an airplane, but we know she was just excited.

## **New Orleans/Jefferson Regional Office**

### **Congratulations**

### **May Employee of the Month**



**Roxann Tuircuit** is a very diligent and conscientious Social Worker who genuinely cares about the youth and the families she serves. She is a strong advocate and will listen to the youth and verbalize an

understanding of their individual needs. Roxann has dedicated her entire career working with children and families in need of

various services to include mental health, reintegration and parenting skills training. She has shown her dedication to the Office of Juvenile Justice by her 20 years of service with the agency. Roxann is an asset to the agency.

## **Mayor Landrieu hosts Cops, Community and Clergy Empowerment sessions**



Members of the New Orleans Police Department, clergy and community gathered at Franklin Avenue Baptist Church to implement action items to reduce crime in neighborhoods. **PPS Ralph Jones** attended to represent OJJ.

## **Milestone Academy Celebrated Finals and Leap-May Fair 2011**

This was a joyous event that **PPO Evalina Lestrick** and **Social Worker Roxann Tuircuit, LMSW**, attended to recognize our kids in the community for outstanding academic achievement throughout the school year. The administration and school looked forward to the event, after working so diligently all year.



*Face painting at the May Fair*



Milestone SABIS® Academy of New Orleans is a provider of quality education to a highly diverse student body. Milestone SABIS® Academy of New Orleans strives to help all students achieve their full potential, prepare them for success in college, equip them with the ability and desire for lifelong learning, and strengthen their civic, ethical, and moral values. Milestone SABIS® Academy of New Orleans maintains high standards of efficiency and accountability throughout its operation.

### The Best of the Class of 2011

**PPO3 Milton Crosby Jr.**, says of his family: On May 21, both of my sons graduated. **Milton L. Crosby, III**, graduated from the University of Louisiana at Monroe with a BBA in Accounting and is considering attending law school. **Marcus L. Crosby** graduated from Archbishop Shaw High School and will attend Xavier University. Marcus also earned a TOPS scholarship and was awarded a \$1,000.00 scholarship from the Gamma Ro Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. As parents, my **wife Linda** and I are very proud of our sons and pray that GOD will continue to bless and keep them as they begin new chapters in their lives. Great accomplishments!



**Marcus L. Crosby**



**Milton L. Crosby, III**

**Ariel Lucius, niece of PPO Daria Melder**, received the Dean Carolyn Collins Distinguished Scholar and Citizenship Award during the Black Scholars Awards Program and Reception in April at the LSU student union. Ariel earned a 4.0 GPA during her freshman year at LSU, where she is majoring in dramatic arts. This young lady may want to be in plays, but she is not playing around when it comes to her academics. Her family is very proud of her accomplishments thus far and believes she will continue to be successful in her future endeavors.

Kudos to **PPO Vera C. Seals**, as she celebrated a joyous and rare affair with the opportunity to witness **dual graduations** of her daughters, **Lacey** and **Leianna Seals**. On May 19, Lacey graduated with honors from Edna Karr Senior High School in New Orleans and a day later, her oldest daughter, Leianna, marched across the stage, graduating cum laude, from the University of New Orleans. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Film, Theatre and Communication Arts. PPO Seals said, "my husband, **Leroy Seals, Jr.**, and I are very proud parents. We have been blessed with two beautiful, intelligent daughters, known as the Seals Sisters." She acknowledged that they give **GOD** the glory!



**Lacey and Leianna Seals**

**Matthew Melder, nephew of PPO Daria Melder**, was chosen as Altar Boy of the Year for St. Rita's Catholic Church. Matthew stood out among his peers and was recognized for his service, dedication and commitment to excellence. He leads by example and his family is extremely proud of his spiritual commitment.

## Natchitoches Regional Office

### Congratulations to our Employee of the Month



**Rachal Martin, Transport Officer**

**PPO Deanna Williams** took time to make Mother's Day cards with girls in the Intensive Residential unit at Ware Youth Center. Fun was had by all.

### Celebrations Acknowledge Staff

Our RM and supervisors treated us twice! Staff celebrated Employee Recognition Day with breakfast provided by **RM Randall Hill**, **PPS Simon Sarpy** and **PPS Kristen McComic**, and they also treated us to lunch to celebrate Probation & Parole Appreciation Week. We appreciate them as well.



**Monica Breedlove, left, and Rosa Brownlee** were surprised for Administrative Professional Day with a gift of decorative baskets that included a

monogrammed coffee cup, photo frame and a plate plaque. The administrative staff is

appreciative of all the employees at Natchitoches OJJ.

### Welcome to New Staff

Natchitoches OJJ welcomes two new employees, **Magen Smith, Transport Officer**, and **Wendy Crow, Administrative Coordinator 3**.



*Magen Smith and Wendy Crow*

### Community Involvement

**PPO Heather Christophe**, right, volunteered to coach a 6 year-old girls' tee-ball team for the Natchitoches Dixie Youth Association.

**PPS Simon Sarpy** continues to umpire Dixie Youth Association ballgames for the youth of Natchitoches.



*Passion Flower on my vine at home – Kristi Walker, Swanson Administrative Assistant, director's office.*

## Monroe Regional Office

### Congratulations

**PPO1 Valerie Nordstrom** recently graduated from the Probation & Parole POST Academy in Baton Rouge. **RM Patty Newman** and **PPS Orlando Davis** attended the ceremony, held at the Old State Capitol. Valerie received the Academic Award for having the highest overall GPA in the Academy. Congratulations Valerie! We are proud of you and glad to have you back.

**PPO3 Jennifer Bible** and her family have moved into their new home in West Monroe. Congratulations Jen and J.R. When are we gonna have a cookout?

Monroe OJJ's **RM Patty Newman** and the **supervisors** showed our appreciation for **Administrative Coordinators Gay Nivens, Shirley Price, Diann Dixon, Kashka Flintroy** and **Janice Curvin**, by presenting them with gift cards on Administrative Professionals Day. They do a GREAT job!

With the rising water and flood threat in Louisiana, Monroe OJJ's Emergency Response Team has been on alert. Team members have completed FEMA independent study courses in preparation for possible deployment.

### Class of 2011

**Megan Wheelis, daughter of Mike and PPO3 Janice Wheelis**, graduated from West Ouachita High School in May. Megan met all requirements for the TOPS Scholarship and she will attend ULM in the fall to pursue a nursing degree. Megan was enrolled in honors classes during her entire four years of high school. She participated in gymnastics, cheerleading, track, Biology Club, Spanish Club, and served as a school mentor to assist freshman students with a successful adjustment to high school. Mike, Janice and the entire OJJ family are proud of Megan.

**Terravia L. Cooper, niece of PPO3 Patrick Cooper**, graduated from Grambling State University in May with a Bachelor of Arts in psychology. She will attend graduate school at Texas Women's University in Denton, Texas. We are proud of you, Terravia!

**Marcella A. Price, granddaughter of AC3 Shirley Price**, graduated from Bossier High School with a 3.5 GPA and will attend Dillard University in New Orleans to study pre-med. Some of her high school activities included cheerleader, track team, DARE role model, National Honor Society vice president, Student Council, drill team, Who's Who of Bossier High School, Junior ROTC (P.T. Commander), Goodwill Industry mentor, Homecoming court, and Bossier Youth Leadership. Congratulations Marcella!

### Fish Story

**PPO3 David McMillan, Ron Dozier, husband of PPO3 Hannah Dozier, and Tre' Cade, son of PPO2 Amanda Wilhite**, recently fished in the Ronald McDonald Big Bass Tournament held at Lake Darbonne. No one brought home the big money, but David and Tre' scored some cool door prizes. They all had fun, and raised money for a great cause. Good Job y'all!

### Goodbye and Hello

Monroe OJJ said good-bye to one of our favorite staff members. **Education Specialist Debra Franklin** recently transferred to Swanson. We had a cake and ice cream party to say farewell. Debra's work with PPOs and youth was invaluable. She will be greatly missed!!



***PPO2 Jeremy Fox and wife Crystal welcomed Macie Grace to the family in April.***



## Lake Charles Regional Office

### Congratulations

**Karli Pullard** has accepted a promotion to the position of Program Specialist.

### Thanks

In a time of great need, **PPO Garrick Chambers** volunteered to fill the role of firearms instructor for Lake Charles OJJ. Garrick attended the 40-hour NRA Handgun/Shotgun Firearms Instructor Training school in May. He completed the training and is now certified to instruct and provide routine firearms training for our office. Thank you, Garrick, for accepting this extra responsibility and for realizing how much our office needed you!

Many Lake Charles OJJ staff enjoyed an End-of-the-School-Year barbecue lunch at the Calcasieu Parish Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJS, the local Juvenile Probation Department). It was a time of collaboration with other juvenile and family serving agencies.

## Lafayette/Opelousas Regional Office



**Judge Ellis Daigle, 27th JDC**, recently spoke to the fourth graders at Church Point Elementary School. His Honor's talk, scheduled by the Louisiana Center for Law and Civic Education, was entitled "Juveniles in the United States."

Judge Daigle spoke about the Louisiana juvenile justice system in particular, discussing how the legal system deals with juvenile offenders from the complaint to adjudication and disposition, and all options

in between. He explained the legal rights of juveniles and that the goal of juvenile justice is to help the juvenile stay out of trouble rather than to punish. He even wore his robe for the occasion!

**Michelle Young**, 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Church Point Elementary, commented that, "We have learned a lot about the three branches of government, levels of government, the Constitution, amendments, and so much of what you spoke to us about. It's nice for the students to see a real person who is involved in what we learn so much about."

### Thanks

Thanks to **PPCT instructors PPOs Lynnette Broussard, Deacon Jones and Mina Travis**, for conducting a weapon retention refresher course recently.

**PPO Cassandra Gardiner**, a certified Louisiana Operation Lifesaver instructor, was a volunteer presenter at the Kid's Health 7 Safety Expo, held in Baton Rouge in May. The Expo was a free event, and featured presenters on topics, such as ATV safety, water safety, car seat safety and electrical safety, just to name a few. Local fire departments and police departments were also on hand to participate.

**AC Alina Perro's daughter, Ashtin Mouton**, participated in the state of Louisiana BB Gun Competition, and placed 1<sup>st</sup> in state in Sitting Position, 2<sup>nd</sup> in state in Kneeling Position, and 3<sup>rd</sup> in St. Martin Parish for all four positions. She will represent Louisiana in a national BB gun competition in Rogers, Arkansas. Alina is very proud of her daughter's accomplishments!



*A tiny honeybee visits a giant sunflower.*



## Jetson Center for Youth

### JCY Works with SU on Voc Ed Program

By Donna Bowie, Family Liaison

Southern University AG center is working with OJJ to enhance its vocational offerings by revamping its horticulture program. This will be done by teaching youth how to implement organic planting techniques and other technical horticulture applications. The partnership will also provide students with a certificate in areas of agriculture, experiences in animal husbandry, Basic Vet Tech, Equine Industry and entrepreneurship. This will be a collaborative partnership with OJJ's education and treatment programs working side by side with the SU Dept. of AG.



*JCY youth in the SU greenhouse.*

In May several youth and staff were invited to tour the SU College of Agriculture. Youth were provided an opportunity to participate in real life experiences during their day. The day started with SU staffers starting their morning routine of checking their goats. JCY youth and staff along with central office staff, watched carefully as the morning checkups on the goats were done: checking goats' eyes, ears and the overall physical condition with some receiving vaccinations before being released to the pasture for the day.

From there the team from JCY and central office toured the poultry, cattle and horticulture areas of the campus. Lunch was

graciously served in the new Department of Agriculture building, and the youth and staff were then treated to dessert and a tour of the SU campus.



*A friendly goat checks in.*

This initiative is under the guidance of **Asst. Secretary Dr. Girard Melancon**. The program is designed to generate interest in possible job training at the agricultural facility on a volunteer basis. Plans are to use Jetson as the pilot program, with plans to replicate it at both Bridge City and Swanson.

The Jetson youth who attended the SU program were impressed with what they learned and experienced. Following are excerpts from the thank-you notes they wrote to the SU staff.

"Yesterday was a lot of fun. I really enjoyed learning about the animals. We learned how to catch a chicken. They also taught us about a healthy diet, which I liked. After all that, we got to go chill by the Mississippi River and see the flood. That was very educational. I hope I can go visit Southern University again."  
**Cody S.**

"I think agriculture is a good career, especially if you like animals. I learned a lot of stuff on the trip and I had a great time."  
**Gary V.**

"I learned stuff that I never imagined learning about, such as how to identify if a goat has worms. I learned how to work with plants and what they need to be organic and healthy. I am really interested in this program because it's a new experience – I don't do stuff like this

so I'll take advantage of the opportunity and run with it."

**Steven C.**

During my trip to Southern I learned a lot. It takes three weeks for a chicken's egg to hatch. Many times when a tree has a head of a mushroom growing out of the tree, it means that the tree is decaying or it is very rotten. Also there are two types of diabetes...I would like to learn more about those types of things because it could help me better my life."

**Jamar B.**

I learned a lot on the trip...I learned about how a bull mates with 50 cows every six months...when you plant crops in a circle it's easier to water them. I enjoyed going because it was a learning experience and I finally got to go somewhere besides court for the first time in four months. I also got to see a positive setting of a college campus. I'm interested in the program and would like to be a part of it."

**Henry M.**

## Hammond Regional Office

### SUPERSTAR!

**Superstar for May was Administrative Coordinator 3 Terri Spencer.** Terri was recognized by **PPO Denise Wall** for inventorying a youth's clothing for her.

### Restorative Justice Activity

A restorative justice activity was held recently at ECHO (Eckerd Youth Alternative Program).

**Jarrod Jessie**, a local youth minister at Beacon Light Baptist Church, spoke to the youth about his experiences with Crime Victim Rights. He talked about his own life of delinquency, how he was able to turn away from his delinquency and build a more positive life.

Following his speech, the youth and counselors worked together to create a poster showing what the rights of crime victims mean to them. The posters were not judged as part of a contest, but rather used as an opportunity for the youth to creatively express themselves, and for the counselors to show the youth what mistakes they've made in the past and how it impacted their lives. **PPOs Mark Benton, Penny Buniff, Amy Johnson, and Denise Wall** attended the event.

ECHO is a contract program that provides highly effective, evidence-based diversion services that improve outcomes and help rehabilitate non-violent juvenile offenders ages 10 to 20. Often used as an alternative to juvenile detention, our diversion services enable youth to remain at home and receive care for mental, emotional and behavioral needs while awaiting disposition.

Because underlying substance abuse, mental health and other family issues are often at the root cause of the delinquency, youth and their families receive individualized treatment plans that may include: intensive case management and monitoring, youth life-skills training, youth mentoring, parent training, individualized home contact, and family support through networks of community resources.

Crime Victims Rights is but one element of the restorative justice project involving delinquent juveniles within the community. Each OJJ office develops, plans and carries out restorative justice projects. In May the focus was on crime victim rights. The restorative justice project aims to actively involve community members, including individual crime victims and offenders, in making decisions and carrying out plans for resolving issues and restoring the community.

## Training Opportunities

Staff completed Violence Free Workplace and Sexual Harassment training this month. We also enjoyed a training presented by OJJ Attorney Cynthia Eyre on the Disciplinary Process.

## PPOs Attend ASIST Workshop

PPOs Shirley Verberne and Danielle August participated in a two-day workshop on Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) at SLU. They learned to understand the concerns of persons at risk of suicide and to apply the Suicide Intervention Model, which they were able practice hands-on. They both found the training very beneficial in both their professional and personal lives. Being able to connect, understand, and assist, may now help them to save a life.



*PPOs Shirley Verberne and Danielle August.*

## Central Office

### Mucho Congratulations

This is **Chief of Investigations Col. Louis Hyatt's** time to shine. He has realized his life's dream – he recently graduated from McNeese State University with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice. It took a little longer than usual, but the Colonel persevered. He started college in 1971, after a stint in the Air Force, and while working as a state trooper, receiving an Associate Degree in criminal justice from Nicholls State University

in 1981, and Bachelor of Liberal Arts from McNeese State University in 1982. But he always wanted to finish the Bachelor's in Criminal Justice. Years later, Col. Hyatt took advantage of the CALL program, an online education program, to go back to McNeese.



He also studied for the Certificate in Juvenile Justice from Northshore Community College, and was recently a member of first graduating class. "After I received the Certificate in Juvenile Justice from Northshore Community College, I decided to finish my education," Col. Hyatt said. "Dr. Livers supported me and encouraged me to go for it. Once you start the education process, it makes it easier to continue. It's also a lot easier when you have the support of your leadership to continue your education. It was really rewarding at the end. I needed 13 hours and went fulltime for that last semester. I graduated with a total of 178 college hours." Many congratulations, Col. Hyatt, we are so very proud of you!



Col. Hyatt said "I want to share a photo of my new granddaughter, **Parker Michelle Hyatt**. She is the daughter of State

Police Lt. Rodney and Michelle Hyatt. You know where she got her cuteness from." Yes, Colonel, we do....



*This is my pink indigo bush in bloom. It's very fragrant and blooms till the first frost. - Lynne Geromini*



## Bridge City Center for Youth

### Bridge City Graduates Ten Youth

By ELA Instructor Trenisha Stanislas

Ten youth residing at Bridge City Center for Youth were recognized at the commencement ceremony for Riverside Alternative School's 2010-2011 graduates.



*BCCY's graduating class.*

The honorees included **Tony M., Elijah N., Raymond A., Taylor B., Glenn C., Roberto R., Derrick S., Christopher T., Roberto V. and Joseph W.**

Prior to the occasion, the youth were afforded an opportunity to celebrate their commencement with their families during a senior brunch, where parents were introduced to the school's principal, **Dr. Roy L. Higgins**, and staff. Some parents shared their appreciation for the teachers' dedication and commitment to working with their children. Teachers were likewise given an opportunity to express encouraging and motivational words about the youth.

During the commencement ceremony, the Eden Westside Baptist Church Choir, of Alabama, was featured to help celebrate the students' achievements. **Valedictorian Tony M. and Salutatorian Elijah N.** addressed their fellow graduates and families with heartfelt words of thanks and encouragement.

In her keynote address, the **Honorable Judge Candace Bates-Anderson**, Orleans Parish Juvenile Court, encouraged the youth to "strive for more." Judge Bates-Anderson conveyed a message of hope as she challenged

the students to set goals and to utilize the support systems that they have in place.

The youth were presented their GED diplomas by **Director Daron Brown, Jetson/Bridge City Center for Youth; Kim Mims, OJJ Director of Education** and **Dr. Roy L. Higgins**, principal of Riverside Alternative School. Each presenter was afforded an opportunity to address the youth with congratulatory words of encouragement.

### Congratulations

**Dal'lis Alexis Davis** is the daughter of **JJS 4 Terri DeLille**, Group Leader of Perseverance Dormitory. Dal'lis graduated from Xavier University's Preparatory High School. Dal'lis was accepted into three colleges, Stillman College, Tuskegee University and Jackson State University. DaL'Lis will attend Tuskegee University.



*Dal'lis Davis*



*Christmas trees and hollies, at the residence of Alana and Alvin Burke, in Edgard. Alana is an Adm. Asst. 3, Bridge City administration.*



## Baton Rouge Regional Office

### Congratulations



**PPS Rickey Cannon is the May Employee of the Month.**

Rickey was nominated because of his calm and spiritual nature. He has been with

OJJ for quite some time and he is definitely a voice for the youth in our office as well as in the community.

### You're Looking Good!

**PPO Patsy Adams** is looking good this month for "operation good deed/good donation." Patsy donated a brand new walker to a working elderly lady who has multiple sclerosis. The donation will help the lady to keep her job and will prevent her from having to buy one. We're watching you, Patsy. "No good deed goes unnoticed" - thank you!

## Alexandria Regional Office

### Congratulations

**PPO Franklin Parrino** persevered and graduated from the POST Academy. He had the highest post test score in his academy. **RM Johnny Qualls** and **PPS Pamela Oakes** attended the Alexandria Police Academy's graduation. Congratulations to Frank!

**PPO2 Robert Harris** continues to participate in a weight loss program at his church. Robert would like to start a weight loss program for OJJ across the state to promote good health.

## Community Outreach

**PPO3 Donna Desoto** presented a speech to a criminal justice class at LSU-A. "This was another opportunity for me to share with the class the strides being made in the reforms in Louisiana," Donna said. "I spoke with them about LAMOD and how the transition has impacted some of our youth." She also discussed the daily routine of a probation officer. Donna encouraged the students, telling them that if they want to make an impact on a young person's life, being a probation officer would be the job of choice.

Donna reports that the Avoyelles Teen Court was invited to participate in National Law Day. Teen court presented a mock trial to the local Bar Association and several judges. The mock case was disturbing the peace by fighting on a school bus. Youth from a local high school participated as jury members, prosecutors, defense attorneys and as the defendant. **State Representative Robert Johnson** presided as the judge. All enjoyed the program.

Thanks to **PPS John Baker**, for providing fish for our fried fish dinner for our office Easter dinner.

Supervisors provided a breakfast for all staff for State Employee Appreciation Day.

Staff contributed to send our Administrative Professionals to Tunk's Cypress Inn for Administrative Professionals Appreciation Day.

**PPO3 Jency Moore** and **PPS John Baker and their spouses** celebrated wedding anniversaries in May. Congratulations to both couples.

**Trinity Adams** was promoted to PPO3.

**PPO2 Robert Harris**, arranged for **Dr. Yolanda Crump** to provide Sex Offender Training to the Alexandria Mentor parents via video conference.



## Recipe of the Month BCCY Culinary Arts & Occupations Chef Ronald J. Sonnier CEC

Unfortunately, Chef Ronald Sonnier is out of the office and the kitchen at Bridge City. He is at home recuperating from a total knee replacement. Still, we thought that you would enjoy two of his most raved-about recipes. When Chef Sonnier and his Culinary Arts class prepare these delectable delights, they are truly the talk of the town. So enjoy your summer and impress your friends and family with these great recipes! We wish you a speedy recovery, Chef Sonnier. We miss you!



### Famous Lemon Squares

#### Crust:

1 cup butter  
2 cups sifted flour  
¼ tsp salt  
½ cup powdered sugar

Mix ingredients and pat into bottom of a 13 x 9-inch baking pan. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes.

#### Topping:

4 eggs, beaten  
2 cups of granulated sugar  
4 tbsp of sifted flour  
5 tbsp of lemon juice  
1 ½ tbsp grated lemon zest

Mix above ingredients and pour on top of baked crust. Put back into 350° degree oven for 25 to 30 minutes. When cool, sprinkle with powdered sugar. Makes 24 small squares.



### Our Favorite Iced Tea

Serves 6 to 8

2 cups sugar	1 tsp. almond extract
2 cups water	1/2 cup lemon juice
2 cups strong freshly brewed tea	enough cold water to complete a gallon
1 tsp. vanilla extract	

Place 2 cups sugar and 2 cups water in a saucepan, bring to a boil and cook for 1 minute. Pour into a pitcher and add brewed tea, extracts, lemon juice and cold water. Stir well and chill. Pour tea over ice.

# The Inside Scoop...of OJJ

*The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is published monthly to communicate with and about OJJ staff in offices and facilities throughout the state, about agency activities, happenings and items of interest.

*The Inside Scoop...of OJJ* is produced by the Central Office with input from staff statewide.

...until next month

## OJJ Administrative Team

Mary L. Livers, Ph.D, MSW, *Deputy Secretary*  
Dr. Girard J. Melancon, *Assistant Secretary*  
Connie Percell, *Undersecretary*  
Carolyn B. Lewis, *Dep. Asst. Secretary, Community Based Services*  
Sean C. Hamilton, *Deputy Assistant Secretary, Facilities*  
Ellyn Toney, *Chief of Operations*  
Karen Stubbs, JD, *Deputy Asst. Secretary, Intergovernmental Relations, Communications & Training*  
Donna Bowie, *Family Liaison*  
Annette Arthur, LCSW, BACS, *Director of Treatment*  
Jerel M. Giarrusso, APR, *Communications Director*  
Gwendolyn Jones, *Human Resources Director*  
Kim B. Mims, *Director of Education*  
Martha Morgan, JD, *General Counsel*  
Kelly D. Smith, MN, APRN, PHCNS-BS, *Health Services Administrator*  
Vanessa Tom, *IT Director*

## Reporters

Alexandria: Sharon Graham  
Baton Rouge: Michelle Thomas  
Bridge City: Cassandra Washington  
Central Office: Katherine Abrams & Gwen Brinkley  
Hammond: Courtney Pegues  
Jetson: Daron Brown  
Lafayette/Opelousas: Kevin Broussard  
Lake Charles: Melissa Cross  
Monroe: Gail Wilson  
Natchitoches: Rosa Brownlee  
New Orleans: Roxann Tuircuit  
Shreveport: Terri Harber  
Swanson: Kristi Walker  
Tallulah: Janet Pierce  
Thibodaux: Allison Lirette

## Intergovernmental Relations, Communications & Training

Karen Stubbs, *Deputy Assistant Secretary*  
Jerel Giarrusso, *Communications Director*  
Fran Martin, *Director of Staff Development*

## Contact

For more information contact [Jerel.Giarrusso@la.gov](mailto:Jerel.Giarrusso@la.gov)  
225.287.7898